THE PLAYBOOK

The 0→$100k/Month DTC Growth Playbook

The exact order we build a brand in — offer, funnel, ads, scale — so growth compounds instead of stalling.

By Dynara Digital · 9 min read · Updated Sep 2026

Most brands don't stall because the founder is lazy. They stall because they run the levers in the wrong order — pouring ad spend into a funnel that leaks, or perfecting a logo while the offer nobody wants stays untouched. This is the sequence we run, in order. Skip a step and the ones after it cost more and return less.

Step 1 — Nail the offer before you touch ads

An offer is not a product. It's the product plus the promise, the price, the risk-reversal, and the reason to buy **now**. If your offer only converts warm traffic, paid ads will bleed. Before spending a dollar on Meta or TikTok, your offer should pass three tests:

- **The stranger test** — a cold visitor understands what it is and why it matters in under five seconds.
- **The margin test** — after COGS, shipping, and a realistic CPA, you keep at least 25–35% contribution margin on the first order.
- **The repeat test** — there's a real reason to buy again, or an AOV lever (bundles, subscribe-and-save) that fixes the math if there isn't.

> If the offer doesn't convert your existing warm audience, do not scale it with paid. You'll just buy proof that it doesn't work.

Step 2 — Build one funnel that converts, not five that don't

You need a single, boring, high-converting path: ad → landing page or PDP → cart → checkout. Every extra choice is a leak. At this stage, resist building a maze of upsells. Get one path converting cold traffic at a healthy rate first.

The conversion order of operations

1. Above the fold: promise + proof + one clear action.
2. Product page: benefit-led copy, real reviews, objection handling.
3. Cart & checkout: fewest fields, trust badges, express payment.

Step 3 — Turn on paid, but read it like an operator

Launch broad, let the platform learn, and judge by contribution margin — not vanity ROAS in the ad account. Your first job in paid is not to scale; it's to find one creative angle and one audience that clears your margin target repeatably.

Stage	Monthly Revenue	Primary lever
Prove	$0–$20k	Offer + 1 winning creative angle
Stabilize	$20k–$50k	Creative volume + funnel CRO
Scale	$50k–$100k	Budget scaling + retention/AOV

Step 4 — Scale on the back of retention, not just acquisition

At $50k+/month, new-customer CPA rises. The brands that break $100k don't out-spend that — they out-retain it. Email and SMS flows, a real reason to reorder, and rising AOV are what let you keep buying traffic profitably. Acquisition gets you to $50k. Retention gets you past it.

THE ONE-LINE VERSION

Offer → Funnel → Paid → Retention. Do them in order. Fix the leak before you widen the pipe.